

P O E M S  
WRITTEN IN CLOSE CONFINEMENT  
IN THE  
TOWER AND NEWGATE,  
UNDER A CHARGE OF  
H I G H T R E A S O N.

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By JOHN THELWALL.

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FOOL, DO NOT BOAST:  
THOU CAN'ST NOT TOUCH THE FREEDOM OF MY MIND,  
—ALTHO' THIS CORPORAL RIND  
THOU HAST IMMANACLED.

MILTON.

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L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, AND SOLD BY J. RIDGWAY, YORK-STREET, ST.  
JAMES'S-SQUARE; H. D. SYMONDS, PATERNOSTER-ROW; AND D. I. EATON,  
NEWGATE-STREET.

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Entered at Stationers' hall,



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE following poems, with an exception only to *part* of the second Ode, were written (as the title page announces) during a rigorous and unprecedented confinement. Their composition, and the preparations for a Course of Lectures, shortly to be delivered, occupied some of those solitary hours which might have been irksome, but for some such source of amusement; and as they are sketches of the state of mind during that season, and, in some degree, a breviary of the sentiments and principles which occasioned my persecution, they may perhaps gratify the curiosity of those who wish to know what the feelings of men are in situations the most perilous and awful, when supported by the consciousness of suffering for a virtuous principle.

THE little poem beginning "Short is perhaps our "date of life," was the first, in point of date, written under any impression that our *lives* were to be weighed in the balance of criminal Justice. For though it was difficult to conceive, after the rigorous confinement we were committed to, how our persecutors could

Not short of such extremities, yet considering the flimsy nature of their pretences, and how directly every maxim of the law, and every judicial decision, for more than a century, was against them, I could not persuade myself they would have the assurance to prefer a charge of Treason: especially as I supposed them not quite ignorant of the history of their Country, and the fate of those daring perverters of Justice who, in earlier periods, upheld the tyrannical doctrines of accumulative and constructive Treason.

HAPPILY, however, for the Country, they were blind, but Juries were not obsequious; and the Liberties of Britons, if the victory is used with equal firmness and moderation, will acquire a basis the more solid from this attempt to overthrow them.

THESE Poems have perhaps little but sentiment to recommend them. They are generally transcripts of the heart, rather than flights of the imagination;—rather intended to rouse the patriotic feeling, than calculated to amuse the admirer of poetical enthusiasm. I have spoken what I felt; not considered what I should speak; a method, at least, the most honest, and sometimes the most successful, in appealing to the hearts of others.

WHEN, however, I speak of sentiment, I do not use the term in its too general sense. They who look for the sighs of personal regret, and the elegiac tenderness of complaint, will certainly be disappointed. The pathetic Ovid might *lament* his banishment from the country of his mistress and the social circle of his friends; but the Patriot, immured in the walls of a bastille, is called upon, by important duties, to repel every enervating sensation, and cultivate those habits of reflection only which may increase the energy of his mind, and enable him to render his sufferings ultimately beneficial to mankind. And if he feels as he ought, whatever affections or attachments may be incidental to him, one preponderating idea will be constantly present to his imagination :—THE SACRED CAUSE FOR WHICH HE SUFFERS.

*Beaufort Buildings,  
Jan. 5, 1795.*



# P O E M S.

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## S O N N E T I.

### *THE FEELINGS OF A PARENT.*

AH! who yet conscious of the social glow  
Of Nature—or whose generous breast can feel  
An offspring's future woe or future weal,  
The cause of sacred Freedom would forego,  
For aught luxurious Grandeur can bestow,  
Or Tyranny inflict? Who that can view  
~~In Meditation's glass the scenes of war~~  
The darling issue of his loins must know  
Beneath the Despot's rod, but would pursue  
(To Nature, and to Patriot virtue true)  
The glorious chace of Liberty, and scorn  
Each fierce opposing danger—the fell steel  
Of ruthless Janissaries—the stern Bastille—  
Its bars, its iron doors, and caves forlorn,  
Ere leave a trampled Realm in chains to mourn?

*Tower, 12th July, 1794.*

## SONNET II.

## TO TYRANNY.

O HELL-born Tyranny ! how blest the land  
 Whose watchful Citizens with dauntless breast  
 Oppose thy *first* approach ! With aspect bland  
 Thou wont, alas ! too oft, to lull to rest  
 The sterner virtues that should guard the throne  
 Of Liberty. Deck'd with the gaudy zone  
 Of Pomp, and usher'd with lascivious arts  
 Of glossing Luxury, thy fraudulent smile  
 Ensnares the dazzled senses, till our hearts  
 Sink, palsied, in degenerate lethargy.  
 Then bursts the swollen destruction forth ; and while  
 Down the rough tide of Power Oppression drives  
 The shipwreck'd multitude, no hope survives,  
 But from the whelming storm of Anarchy.

Tower, 14<sup>th</sup> July, 1794.

## SONNET III.

## T O L U X U R Y.

HENCE, Luxury! fell opiate c the soul!

Hence! with thy gaudy visions, that confound  
The wildering sense, and to the base controul

Of Vice subdue thy votaries. On the ground  
Where thy detested drugs are strew'd, shall blow

No flower of manly worth: there Liberty,  
That on the rugged cliff delights to grow

Of virtuous Poverty, shall never shed

Its soul-reviving sweets; nor there shall spread  
The wild flowers of Content, and guiltless Joy—

The twining woodbine Friendship—nor thy flower,  
Fair Truth! that like the snow-drop, the stern power

Of Winter's blast defies: No, Luxury!

These, and each pure delight, thy noxious weeds destroy.

*Tower, 16th July.*

## SONNET IV.

## TO SIMPLICITY OF MANNERS.

O for the Spartan Fife, to pierce the ear  
 Of slumbering Virtue, and again restore  
 Those ancient Manners—simple and severe,  
 That aw'd encroaching Tyranny!—No more  
 Should'st thou, degenerate Briton! then deplore  
 Thy desolated villages—thy plains,  
 (Where Joy no more, nor rural Plenty reigns)  
 Deserted for the distant, happy shore,  
 Where smiles thy once lov'd Liberty, and where  
 No trampled myriads shed the bitter tear  
 Of Want, that pamper'd Luxury may lie  
 Stretch'd on her gorgeous couch, and quaff the strain  
 Of soul-seducing Flattery, while the train  
 Of Misery heave unheard the pleading sigh.

*Tower, 17th July.*

## SONNET V.

## THE SOURCE OF SLAVERY.

AH! why, forgetful of her ancient fame,  
 Does Britain in lethargic fetters lie?  
 Why from the burning cheek, and kindling eye,  
 Burst no keen flashes of that sacred flame  
 That wont the free-born energies proclaim  
 Of Albion's hardy race?—Alas! we fly  
 The homely altars—slight the once-lov'd name  
 Of rustic Liberty, and deify  
 Luxurious Pride. To her the pliant soul  
 We bend degenerate! her vain pomps adore,  
 And chace the simple virtues from the shore  
 They wont to guard. Hence to the base controul  
 Of Tyranny we bow, nor once complain;  
 But hug with servile fear the gilded chain.

*Tower, 17th July.*

C

SONNET VI.  
TO ANCESTRY.

O, THAT there were indeed some hidden charm—  
 Some magic power in Ancestry!—thy shore,  
 O Britain! then, renown'd in days of yore  
 For gallant spirits, ne'er should brook the arm  
 Of tyrannous Oppression;—then no more  
 Should thy degenerate progeny adore  
 The arts of splendid Slavery, that now  
 Unnerve the soul, and of her 'custom'd vow  
 Defraud thy once-lov'd Liberty;—the lore  
 Of Freedom should be reverenc'd; nor the few,  
 To ancient fame, and patriot feeling true,  
 Who dare assert thy rights, deserted mourn—  
 From each endearing tie of Nature torn,  
 And from the dungeon's gloom their Country's fall  
 deplore.

*Tower, 17th July, 1794.*

## SONNET VII.

*THE VANITY OF NATIONAL GRANDEUR.*

ILL fares the land to giddy lust of Power,  
 To Pomp, and vain Magnificence resign'd,  
 Whose wasteful arts the hard earn'd fruits devour  
 Wrung from the labours of the weary Hind,  
 And Artist's curious hand:—the cheated mind  
 May hail a while, 'tis true, the splendid hour,  
 Delusive; but Destruction hovers near:  
 The gaudy vapour fades!—dark tempests lour!  
 And fell Oppression's thunder strikes with fear  
 The enervate Soul. So the way-faring swain,  
 Loitering in trackless wilds, intent, admires  
 The gaudy clouds ting'd with Sol's parting fires,  
 Till dark'ning mists involve the spacious plain,  
 And rising tempests wake the prowling train—  
 Then from his trance awakes; and wails his fate—in vain!

*Tower, 18th July, 1794.*

## SONNET VIII.

ON THE REPORT OF THE DEATH OF THOMAS MUIR,  
ON BOARD THE SURPRISE, IN HIS PASSAGE TO  
BOTANY BAY.

AH, who shall now on happiness presume  
From Parts or Virtue, on this thankless earth,  
When, in the floating dungeon's noxious gloom,  
MUIR falls a victim to his Patriot worth?

That noble spirit, still for Freedom warm.  
Enlighten'd, manly, eloquent, and brave,  
That fearless stemm'd Oppression's raging storm,  
Has sunk, subdued, beneath the whelming wave.

Yet O brave Martyr! (if thy hovering shade  
Still feel its wonted ardour) let the tear  
And grateful honours to thy memory paid,  
With kindling hopes thy Patriot spirit cheer—  
Proofs that, with souls unaw'd, the virtuous few,  
The sacred cause of Freedom still pursue.

*Tower, 18th Sept. 1794.*

## SONNET IX.

*THE CELL.*

WITHIN the Dungeon's noxious gloom  
 The Patriot still, with dauntless breast,  
 The cheerful aspect can assume—  
 And smile—in conscious Virtue blest!

The damp foul floor, the ragged wall,  
 And shattered window, grated high;  
 The trembling Ruffian may appal,  
 Whose thoughts no sweet resource supply.

But he, unaw'd by guilty fears,  
 (To Freedom and his Country true)  
 Who o'er a race of well-spent years  
 Can cast the retrospective view,  
 Looks inward to his heart, and sees  
 The objects that must ever please.

*Newgate, 24th Oct.*

D

SONNET X.

TO THOMAS HARDY, ON HIS CONDUCT ON THE DAY  
OF HIS ACQUITTAL.

HARDY, whose Spartan virtue wakes the glow  
Of generous emulation—while the tear  
(Erewhile by Patriot zeal forbad to flow)  
Amidst thy well-earn'd triumphs, o'er the bier  
Of a lov'd Confort falls, our hearts bestow  
Responsive drops, and brighter still appear  
Thy manly virtues.—O supremely blest—  
Could *worth* our blifs secure!—Thy generous soul,  
By Nature's partial hand alike imprest  
With Fortitude, above the base controul  
Of Tyranny, and the diviner zest  
Of social Tendernefs, a meed shall claim  
Beyond the Muse's praise, while deathlefs Fame  
Inscribes, in Freedom's shrine, thy Patriot name.

*Newgate, Nov. 6.*

## S O N N E T    X I.

*THE PHŒNIX.*

ON READING PHOCION'S FIRST LETTER IN THE  
MORNING CHRONICLE.

PHOCION—or whether from the Phœnix tomb  
 Of Junius, thou, with renovated youth,  
 Awak'ft, to soar like him on equal plume  
 To Freedom's solar height, or art in truth  
 That Phœnix self—with eager joy we view  
 Thy daring flight, and thy bold course purfue  
 With new-reviving ardour, from thy wings  
 Shook thro' the bright'ning æther. Rareft bird,  
 For splendor and unequall'd flight preferr'd,  
 Still, o'er our fky when proud Oppreffion flings  
 Her veil of threat'ning clouds, to chill the foul  
 Of Britain's fons (once foremoft at the goal  
 Of virtuous Liberty) may thou appear  
 Corruption's towering progreff to controul,  
 And Freedom's drooping train with brighter vifions  
 cheer.

*Newgate.*

SONNET XII.

*THE CRISIS.*

" I will not, like a careless poet, spoil  
 " The last act of my play, till now applauded,  
 " By giving the world just cause to say I fear'd  
 " Death more than the loss of honor."

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

IT comes—the awful hour!—Compatriots dear,  
 Who oft, confiding in my honest zeal,  
 And keen attachment to the public weal,  
 Bent to my artless theme the partial ear;  
 Now search my breast with scrutiny severe:  
 That breast which frequent in the swelling pride  
 Of youthful ardor, the stern threats defied  
 Of distant danger: mark, if now base fear  
 Palsy its boasted virtue—or if now  
 (Forgetful of the truths so oft upheld)  
 Abject beneath the imperious foot I bow  
 Of terror-vested Power—suppliant!—depress'd!—  
 Or one emotion feel, but what the breast  
 Of Hampden or of Sidney might have swell'd.

*Newgate, Nov. 26.*

ODE I.

*THE UNIVERSAL DUTY.*

I.

THERE are, degenerate !—to the future blind—  
 Who deem the Patriot fervor—the firm soul  
 That spurns Oppression, and the base controul  
 Of Tyranny, should be to him resign'd,  
 To whose lone bosom for protection clings  
 No tender Bride—to whose embraces springs  
 No smiling infant, to awake the mind  
 To social tendernefs.—Ah, fond mistake !  
 Freedom, the just inheritance of all,  
 Should be by all asserted ; at the call  
 Of this eternal principle should wake,  
 As at th' Archangel's trump, the slumb'ring world ;  
 And to the glorious standard, wide unfurl'd,  
 Of foul-ennobling Truth impatient throng ;  
 While Civic-Virtue chaunts the martial song,  
 And on their blood-stain'd Thrones fell Tyrants shake.

E

II.

The enamour'd Youth, stung with ingenuous shame,  
 While at the Despot's nod his Country bows,  
 Should blush to meet the Virgin's answering vows  
 With unscar'd breast, or Love's endearments claim,  
 Till his indignant Virtue had been prov'd  
 In some brave effort. For the wretch, unmov'd  
 By Patriot Virtue, tho' his outward frame,  
 Blooming as spring, and gay as youthful steers,  
 Promise Love's joyous harvest, yet, pursu'd  
 By Slavery's abject terrors—aw'd—subdu'd—  
 To Hymen's couch but half his manhood bears.  
 Even hoary Age should fire the rising race  
 With grave example; and, the dire disgrace  
 To spurn, one brave, expiring effort lend;  
 Scorning beneath a servile yoke to bend  
 That of all reverence robs his silver hairs!

III.

But chief the Patriot flame should rouse the Sire  
 To deeds of manly Virtue, and inspire

The high disdain of Tyrannous controul.

Each Grace

New op'ning in the smiling face  
Of a lov'd Infant, should awake his soul

To bolder energy :

For who that traces, with delighted eye,  
In the Babe's playful features the soft smile  
Of a lov'd Confort, or the bolder traits  
Of his own manly form, but heaves the sigh,  
And feels the burning blush, to think, the while  
Inglorious indolence consumes his days,  
The chains are forging by encroaching Power  
Shall cramp those darling limbs, and bend that neck—  
Round which his anxious arms so oft entwain'd!  
Ah! who could bear—nor curse his natal hour—  
To see his offspring to the general wreck  
Of fell Oppression hopelessly resign'd?  
Or who, with Nature's generous feeling blest,  
While o'er his couch the iron sceptre waves,  
Would strain a trembling Partner to his breast,  
And stamp his image on a brood of Slaves?

*Tower, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 1794.*

O D E II.

I. 1.

WHY toils my friend, to train the docile mind  
 Of yon gay stripling to the arduous chace  
 Of Virtue?—Why with greedy ear, reclin'd  
 In rapturous trance (while o'er his blooming face  
 The emulous suffusion steals, and wakes  
 Athenian ardour in his kindling eye)  
 Imbibes he the proud lesson, and partakes,  
 In strong Imagination, the fierce joy  
 Of Greece triumphant o'er the threat'ning hords  
 Of Persia's despot, when the Spartan spear  
 And Attica's firm phalanx mock'd the swords  
 Innumerable of marshall'd slaves, by fear  
 Alone of the fell scourge impell'd to wield  
 The forceless steel, and unavailing shield?

I. 2.

Or when the patriot legend greets his ear  
 Of Rome enfranchis'd from the galling yoke  
 Of Tarquin, (when the patriot soul severe  
 Of Brutus from the cloud of torpor broke;

And, brandishing the reeking steel, that shed  
 Chaste purple drops, fresh from the bleeding breast  
 Of wrong'd Lucretia, on the Tyrant's head

He pour'd avenging wrath—nor yet suppress'd  
 The indignant Virtue, when his sons conspir'd  
 Against their Country's freedom) wherefore swells  
 His youthful breast with Roman ardor fir'd,

While he, in turn, the like adventure tells—  
 How in the assembled Senate with firm blow  
 A second Brutus laid Rome's Tyrant low?

## I. 3.

Ah, heedless parent! ere too late forego  
 The dangerous lesson; nor with fatal zeal  
 Wake that keen ardour for the public weal  
 Which might, in happier times, renown bestow,  
 And love, and admiration:—ah, forbear

To rouse those generous feelings whence shall flow  
 Down the lov'd cheek of him thy anxious care  
 So fondly nurtures, the sad drops that show,  
 The inward-bleeding heart—the deep despair  
 And anguish that the Patriot bosom tear,  
 When Public Spirit buried in the tomb  
 Of Avarice lies; and from the fruitful womb

Of overgrown Corruption (unrestrain'd  
 By shame, or soft compunction) bursts to day  
 Oppression's monster brood—to havoc train'd,  
 And waste, and fell rapacity—that prey  
 Upon a Country's vitals, and destroy  
 Whate'er laborious Virtue should enjoy.

## II. 1.

'Tis true, the antique tale may charm the ear  
 Of Athens, long with Arts and Freedom crown'd,  
 And Lacedæmon's hardy race, severe  
 In Patriot Virtue ; each for arms renown'd,  
 And stedfast hate of Tyranny : nor thou,  
 Peaceful Achaia ! less canst warm the mind  
 With sacred love of Justice :—for whose brow  
 Equality a Civic wreath entwin'd  
 Of all the softer Virtues that adorn  
 Humanity—and which, but on the foil  
 Where Freedom, like the dew-distilling morn  
 Sheds her bland influence, ever deign to smile.  
 But who would cherish now the sacred fire  
 These glowing scenes of ancient worth inspire?

II. 2.

Lo, for the patriot, now, whose manly voice  
 Loud in the cause of Justice, dare proclaim  
 A trampled People's sufferings—or rejoice  
 When Freedom triumphs, and, o'erwhelm'd with shame,  
 The routed hordes of Despotism retire—  
 Lo, what for him Tyrannic Power prepares,  
 Insatiable of vengeance!—for base hire  
 While perjur'd sycophants with treacherous snares  
 Encompass him around. Canst thou endure  
 The fruit of all thy cares immur'd should pine  
 Within the Dungeon's gloom, and drink, impure,  
 The Prison's pent-up breeze, where never shine  
 Or Morning's cheering beams, or the soft ray  
 That gilds with varying tints the fading day.

II. 3.

But what are these?—What is the Dungeon's gloom,  
 The gale impure that round the sullen walls  
 Creeps noxious, and, in deathful whispers, calls  
 The fiend Contagion to assure the doom.

Which Tyranny pronounces?—What are these  
 (The worst that wait upon the ruffian crimes  
 Of Violence!) to what stern Power decrees  
 Should rend his feeling soul who, in the times  
 Of Tyrannous Corruption, dare proclaim  
 A Country's wrongs, and the insulted name  
 Of Liberty invoke—or call to mind  
 The deeds of Ancient Worth, which (ere resign'd  
 To Luxury and Avarice) the brave race  
 Of Albion's sons atchiev'd :—the deathless fame  
 Of steel-clad fires, who nobly dar'd to chace  
 The royal Lion to the toils, and claim  
 Their country's Charter;—the undaunted pride  
 Of Hampden, who a Tyrant's wrath defied,  
 And bled for Freedom;—or the virtuous zeal  
 Of Russell, Sidney, who like martyrs died,  
 The certain doom of Tyranny to seal?

## III. 1.

To him, presumptuous, who the inspiring theme  
 Dares thus recount of Albion's former fame,  
 Or strife of Patriot Heroes to redeem  
 Invaded Liberty—To him—oh, shame

Of this degenerate age !—To him no more  
 The cheering voice of confidence shall flow,  
 Nor friend, nor gentle relative, explore  
 The feelings of his heart ; no more the glow  
 Of social tenderness, whose smiles bestow  
 Hope in despair, and in affliction joy,  
 Shall warm his breast, but solitude consume  
 His cheerless days, and the fine nerve destroy  
 Of soul-ennobling sympathy.—Such doom  
 Must Virtue now experience in the isle  
 That vainly boasts of Freedom's partial smile.

## III. 2.

And wilt thou yet the filial pupil train  
 To deeds of Patriot worth ? Wilt thou still seek  
 To enforce the scorn of strong Oppression's chain,  
 And call the blushing virtue in his cheek  
 With themes of emulation ? Generous Sire !  
 Thine is a Roman's part—the awful zeal  
 That fir'd the Consul's soul, whose Patriot ire  
 Condemn'd his offspring for the general weal  
 To ignominious death. Yet, oh, proceed ;  
 Instil the lore of Virtue, and imbue  
 His youthful reason with the sacred creed,  
 That not for self alone—not for the few

Whom kindred ties endear, we live. The soul  
By Justice warm'd pants for the kindred whole.

## III. 3.

Fired with this truth, the energetic mind  
Rises superior to the vengeful pride  
Of Power, and, with unfailing stores supplied  
Of intellectual ardour, leaves behind  
The world's ignoble passions—such as bow  
The flexile soul—and chief desponding Fear,  
That with ideal terrors arms the brow  
Of tyrant Death, and bars the lifted spear.  
What then, to those who breathe the heart-felt vow  
At Freedom's shrine, and the pure flame avow  
Of Virtue—what are dungeons?—what the gloom  
Of Solitude, to him who thus can turn  
From *Self* to *Sentient Nature*—to the doom  
Of myriads yet in embryo, who shall learn  
To bless his virtues, and enjoy secure  
The Liberty he toil'd for? Blissful thought!  
Who would not bleed such prospects to insure,  
And own the patriot triumph cheaply bought?

*NELLY's COMPLAINT.*

A BALLAD.

ON THE MARCH OF A DETACHMENT OF GUARDS  
FROM THE TOWER; TO JOIN THE ARMY IN  
FLANDERS.

WHEN WILLY first, by war's alarms,  
Was summon'd to the hostile shores,  
Keen sorrow dimm'd young NELLY's charms;  
And thus the nymph her fate deplores:—

“ Ah, foul befall the wicked wights  
“ Who plunge the world in endless strife,  
“ Which Love's delightful harvest blights,  
“ And blasts each tender joy of life?

“ Must WILLY, from his Country torn,  
“ A stranger's doubtful cause sustain,  
“ And leave his faithful maid to mourn,  
“ O'er vows of Love return'd in vain?

“ Must he the weary march sustain,  
“ And rest on the unshelter'd ground,  
“ While ruthless winds, and pelting rain,  
“ And countless dangers rage around?

" Must he the graceful form expose,  
 " That early won my virgin heart,  
 " Where cannon, placed in murd'rous rows,  
 " At once a thousand deaths impart ?

" Ah yet, ye great ones ! pause and hear—  
 " Let Peace dispel these dire alarms ;  
 " Ah ! dry the widow's, virgin's tear,  
 " Nor tear my WILLY from my arms."

She figh'd, and dropp'd the pearly show'r,  
 And rear'd her pleading arms on high.  
 But what avails to haughty pow'r  
 The humble maiden's pleading sigh ?

Still, at the nod of ruthless pride,  
 The widow-making cannon roars ;  
 And torn from NELLY's faithful side,  
 Her WILLY seeks the hostile shores.

*Tower, 5th July, 1794:*

STANZAS

ON HEARING FOR CERTAINTY THAT WE WERE  
TO BE TRIED FOR HIGH TREASON.

SHORT is perhaps our date of life,  
But let us while we live be gay—  
To those be thought and anxious care  
Who build upon the distant day.

Tho' in our cup tyrannic Power  
Would dash the bitter dregs of fear,  
We'll gaily quaff the mantling draught,  
While patriot toasts the fancy cheer.

Sings not the seaman, tempest-toft,  
When furies wash the rivven shroud—  
Scorning the threat'ning voice of Fate,  
That pipes in rocking winds aloud?

Yes;—he can take his cheerful glass,  
And toast his mistress in the storm,  
While duty and remember'd joys  
By turns his honest bosom warm.

And shall not we, in storms of state,  
At base Oppression's fury laugh,  
And while the vital spirits flow,  
To Freedom fill, and fearless quaff?

Short is perhaps our date of life,  
But let us while we live be gay—  
To those be thought and anxious care  
Who build upon the distant day.

*Tower, Sept. 28, 1794.*

STANZAS

ON

*HAPPINESS.*

WHO is the man that's truly blest ?  
Not he who in inglorious ease  
Saunters thro' life ;—whose sordid breast  
The sensual joy alone can please.

Not he who waits the flow decays  
Of sickness or decrepid age,  
Counting the long—long—listless days  
That no benignant views engage.

No ; but the man whose generous soul  
Glow with the love of Human kind ;  
Who, pressing on to Freedom's goal,  
Casts every selfish thought behind.

'Tis he—the PATRIOT—honour'd name !  
Blest with a heart that cannot fear,  
Can best the proud distinction claim  
Of solid bliss, and joy sincere.

What tho' Oppression's iron fang  
 Arrest him, yet in youthful bloom?  
 He owns perhaps one kindred pang;—  
 And then—*exulting!* meets his doom.

*His Country* o'er the ruthless deed  
 Perhaps the future tear may shed:  
 But HE can glory so to bleed  
 As RUSSELL and as SIDNEY bled!

*Tower, 18th Oct. 1794.*

ANACREONTIC.

'TIS not how long we have to live,  
 But how much Pleasure is to come,  
 That real Wisdom would enquire,  
 Could Oracles proclaim our doom.

Could we, like those before the Flood,  
 Instead of years, by cent'ries count,  
 If fetter'd by monastic rules,  
 Say, what would be the vast amount?

Days, months, and years—the driv'ler's tale—  
 Are cyphers—and for nothing tell:  
 Enjoyments are the numeral signs  
 That Life's intrinsic value swell.

Then let us seize the present hour,  
 The blifs within our grasp enjoy;  
 Since well we know, Blifs once possess'd  
 Not Jove himself can e'er destroy.

Who will, Oppression's power may aid,  
 (Crouching beneath the iron rod!)  
 And yield his cheerful powers of mind  
 Obsequious to the haughty nod.

For me—what force would grasp in vain  
 I scorn, from timid awe, to give:—  
 My Life the Tyrant may destroy;—  
 But not my Pleasures while I live.

*Tower, 18th Oct. 1794.*

STANZAS,

WRITTEN ON THE MORNING OF TRIAL, TO THE  
FOUR PRISONERS LIBERATED ON THE SAME  
DAY.

PATRIOTS belov'd, with whom so long  
Oppression's fang I've borne,  
Attend the cordial, parting song,  
That greets this happy morn.

Tho' o'er *my* head the harpy Power  
Still yell for guiltless blood,  
I hail the long-expected hour  
Fraught with your present good.

Go, cheer again the kindred train,  
And long-divided friend;  
The fair one to your bosom strain,  
And all her terrors end.

Go, fill the laughing goblet high  
To Freedom, Mirth, and Love;  
And, as the unheeded minutes fly,  
The social joy improve:

For sweeter, from the lonely cell  
At length to life restor'd,  
Shall every soft emotion swell  
Around the social board.

For me, who thus your triumph greet,  
The struggle still remains.  
And I with pride the contest meet  
May snap a People's chains.

Yes—what foe'er my fate decree,  
This prospect cheers my breast,  
The contest shall assist to free  
A nation fore oppress'd.

Should Tyrant arts my fall secure—  
A martyr, with my blood  
The seeds of Freedom I manure,  
Of Truth, and Public-good.

But should I triumph, every power  
And effort of my mind  
Has tenfold virtue, from that hour,  
To benefit mankind,

*Newgate, Dec. 1.*

**FINIS.**

ERRATA.

Sonnet II. for *O Hell born*, read, *O Hell-born*.

Sonnet IV. for *degenerate Briton*, read, *degenerate Britain*.

2d Ode II. 1. for *sacred fire*, read *sacred fire*.

*z p 17 muf 11 up*

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